



# CTC NEWSLETTER



Career Transition Center  
George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center  
U.S. Department of State

## DECEMBER 2005



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*"What I don't like about  
office Christmas  
parties is looking for a  
job the next day."*

*- Phyllis Diller*



## NEGOTIATION MYTHS

By Nan Siemer

Why do myths about negotiation thrive? Because some things about workplace negotiations have changed with the times, and some myths used to be true. But another reason is it's easier to believe those myths than to take the proper negotiation steps.

Negotiating for yourself is not easy or comfortable. It's far easier to negotiate on behalf of the Government with the weight of the United States behind you. More importantly, it's not personal when you negotiate on behalf of the Government. When you negotiate for yourself, you can't help but feel you are being judged. It's better to remind yourself it's not you, but your skills, that you are selling.

Below are the myths and the truths about job negotiations today:

**Myth:** Nobody talks about money at the first meeting.

**Truth:** In fact, you may be asked the salary question BEFORE the first meeting. It is not unusual for a person to ask you on the phone what kind of salary you are seeking. Be prepared! You should have a range in mind (based on worth, not need) before you make the call, and it is safe to state that range with the disclaimer, "depending on the responsibilities and scope of the job." Just remember you are not negotiating with that person. You only negotiate with the person who hires you. This inquiry is usually presented by a Human Resources person, and it is simply intended to see if your salary range is in the ballpark with what this company offers.

**Myth:** He who talks about salary first, loses.

**Truth:** It's nice to get a feeling about a salary range from the interviewer. He/she may even surprise you by quoting a figure

higher than you expected. So, it is okay if the interviewer asks you the salary question to casually turn it around and ask what is budgeted for this job. However, if he turns it back to you, be prepared to quote a range that reflects what your research has found about the value of your skills in your selected market.

**Myth:** You don't have to talk about money at the first interview.

**Truth:** Anyone who leaves an interview without having a sense of what the job pays is a fool. If a competitive wage is that unimportant to you, you'd be better off volunteering. An interview is for you to share AND GATHER information. Compile a wish list and know what is important to you. Make sure you have answers to your most important questions. And, "What is the salary?" should certainly be one of your most important questions.

**Myth:** Salaries are fixed and there is no room for negotiation.

**Truth:** Salary is not the only thing you should be negotiating. You should be looking at the entire employment package. That includes money matters, quality of life issues, educational opportunities and management perks. By looking at all the items in these four areas, a job with a marginal salary may be a lot more appealing to you.

**Myth:** It's best to get a salary at the top of the range offered to you.

**Truth:** Ideally, you'd like to earn a good salary at the upper midpoint of the salary

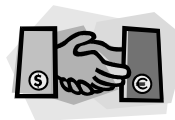
range, so you have room to grow in this position. If you hit the salary ceiling when you first take a job, you'll likely be frustrated about your inability to get increases beyond that ceiling.

**Myth:** They know I'm getting an annuity, so they won't pay me what I'm worth.

**Truth:** UNTRUE in the private sector. They may pay you less, because you ask for less or act like you don't deserve a competitive wage. But the private sector simply doesn't consider your other sources of income when considering your salary.

**Myth:** It's okay to ask for a salary that fills the gap between what your annuity pays and what you earned in your last job.

**Truth:** This is not the way to negotiate. You should be negotiating on worth, not need. What are your skills worth? What is the market paying for someone with your skills? You shouldn't be taking less money because you won the lottery, did a good job with your investments or have an inheritance. Your annuity is nobody's business but yours, and doing the research to get a competitive wage is an investment you make in yourself.



*"Negotiation in the classic diplomatic sense assumes parties more anxious to agree than to disagree."*

*- Dean Acheson*

## EDITOR'S NOTES

Here are some resources that might help you in your negotiations.



### 1. Books

Babcock, Linda and Laschever, Sara  
WOMEN DON'T ASK: NEGOTIATION  
AND THE GENDER DIVIDE

Chapman, Jack  
NEGOTIATING YOUR SALARY: HOW  
TO MAKE \$1000 A MINUTE

Cohen, Herb  
YOU CAN NEGOTIATE ANYTHING

Fisher, Roger and Ury, William  
GETTING TO YES

Koren, Leonard and Goodman, Peter  
THE HANDLER'S HANDBOOK

Krannich, Ronald and Caryl  
DYNAMITE SALARY NEGOTIATIONS:  
KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WORTH AND  
GET IT

Staffin, Nicholas Reid  
NEGOTIATE SMART: THE SECRETS  
OF SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION



*"We're eyeball to eyeball and the other  
fellow just blinked."*

*- Dean Rusk*

### 2. Websites

Salary.com's Negotiation Clinic  
[www.salary.com/advice/layoutscripts/  
advl\\_display.asp?  
tab=adv&cat=nocat&ser=Ser5&part=Par1  
3](http://www.salary.com/advice/layoutscripts/advl_display.asp?tab=adv&cat=nocat&ser=Ser5&part=Par13)

The Wall Street Journal's CareerJournal.com  
[http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/  
negotiate/](http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/negotiate/)

Susan Ireland's Resumes: Salary Negotiation Guide  
[www.susanireland.com/salarywork](http://www.susanireland.com/salarywork)

Salary Negotiation Strategies from Job-Star  
<http://jobstar.org/tools/salary/negostrt.cfm>

Monster.com  
[http://content.monster.com/tools/quizzes/  
salary/](http://content.monster.com/tools/quizzes/salary/)



*"The first principle of contract  
negotiation is don't remind them of  
what you did in the past; tell them  
what you're going to do  
in the future."*

*- San Musial*

## JOB LEADS

If you are currently searching for a job, we recommend that you review some of these articles in the "Wall Street Journal's" *CareerJournal.com* website:



### **Job Searching During the Holidays IS a Good Idea!**

Some of the reasons cited in the articles below are:

- The end of the calendar year marks the end of many companies' fiscal years and they must spend to meet budget deadlines. They may also be hiring for new openings funded in their new fiscal year.
- Psychologically, people want to finish projects and tie up loose ends before the new year begins.
- Positions open up because many professionals quit their jobs in November or December and start new jobs in January.
- Executive recruiters (also known as headhunters) are often paid on a commission based on the fees their company earns for placements. The executive recruiter receives a percentage of each fee s/he earns for the company. As the year progresses, the commission received by an individual executive recruiter rises based on overall yearly billing. The highest percentage s/he will earn will be in December as they start all over again in January.
- Most businesses in the U.S. do not shut down in December and/or January like many of the countries we've been liv-

ing in during our USG careers.

- Many companies want to start the new year well prepared for the challenges ahead. They want all their key positions filled and ready to go.
- There is less competition in December because too many job seekers make the assumption that employers are not hiring during the holidays.
- Networking is easier during the holidays when many professional, community, special interest, and family groups meet to celebrate.
- Employers may be feeling more relaxed during the holidays (especially if the office eggnog is spiked!).



*"We're overpaying him  
but he's worth it."*

*- Samuel Goldwyn*

Capell, Perri. "Don't Let Your Job Hunt Take a Holiday Vacation"

[www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/strategies/20041207-capell.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/strategies/20041207-capell.html)

O'Donnell, Sinara Stull. "Five Myths About Holiday Job Hunting"

[www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/strategies/19991213-odonnell.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/strategies/19991213-odonnell.html)

O'Donnell, Sinara Stull. "Job Hunting in December Is a Worthwhile Strategy"

[www.careerjournal.com/columnists/perspective/20011203-fmp.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/columnists/perspective/20011203-fmp.html)

Scott, Nikki. "Find A New Job Before The Clock Strikes 12"

[www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/networking/19991227-scott.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/networking/19991227-scott.html)

(also featured in our January 2005 newsletter: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/40115.pdf>)



*"That's one thing I like about Hollywood. The writer is there revealed in his ultimate corruption. He asks no praise, because his praise comes to him in the form of a salary check."*

*- Raymond Chandler*

### **How to Handle Rude Questions About Unemployment During the Holidays**

Jones, Russ. "Holiday-Party Strategies For Jobless Executives"

[www.careerjournal.com/columnists/perspective/20011210-fmp.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/columnists/perspective/20011210-fmp.html)

Rosemarin, Judy. "Avoid Search Stress During the Holidays"

[www.careerjournal.com/columnists/perspective/20021125-fmp.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/columnists/perspective/20021125-fmp.html)

White, Erin. "Holidays Bring Extra Stress To Unemployed Professionals"

[www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/jungle/20041229-jungle.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/jungle/20041229-jungle.html)

## **NOTES FOR JSP GRADS**



### **Special Requests**

We would really like to hear your experiences with negotiating salaries and benefits. We want to include them in the newsletter and can print your accounts with or without your name. Real-life examples are especially welcome to our newest graduates — and they would be super helpful to our March 2006 Counselors.

Also, if you have encountered any unusual benefits offered by employers, we would like to hear about those. Some of the interesting ones we have heard about are:

- Legal services plan (discounted routine legal services such as real estate, adoption, divorce, and wills)
- Adoption assistance (partial reimbursements for adoption costs)
- Health club membership
- Confidential counseling service
- Resource and referral service (info regarding child care, elder care, home improvement, etc.)
- Discounts with local vendors
- Financial services plan (discounted brokerage, banking, financial planning, etc.)
- Matching charitable donations
- Free beverages at work
- Pet insurance

Please share your experiences! Send them to Editor Amy Pitts via e-mail ([pittsa@state.gov](mailto:pittsa@state.gov)) or fax (703-302-7416).

*"In a negotiation,  
he who cares less, wins."*

*- Unknown*

### Heads Up!

The January 2006 Foreign Service Journal will focus on "Life and Work After the Foreign Service" and related subjects.

*"If you can't go around it, over it, or through it, you had better negotiate with it."*

- Ashleigh Brilliant



### Job Fair

The next CTC Job Fair will be held on March 28, 2006 from 1 to 4 pm in the FSI Field House.

*"Prepare by knowing your walk away [conditions] and by building the number of variables you can work with during the negotiation ... you need to have a walk away ... a combination of price, terms, and deliverables that represents the least you will accept. Without one, you have no negotiating road map."*

- Author unknown



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